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Daily Highlights

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council authorizes Secretary-General to deploy observers to South Africa "to address areas of concern".

+ Secretary-General reiterates deep concern at further escalation of fighting in Kabul, "particularly grieved" by heavy loss of life among unarmed civilians.

+ Secretary-General to present report to Security Council on Cyprus talks "by end of this week"; joint talks between Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders to resume on 26 October.

+ United Nations humanitarian convoy, carrying urgently needed food supplies, reaches city of Gorazde, where 70,000 people are living under siege.

+ Yugoslavia, in letter to Security Council, stresses its Government'sabhorrence of ethnic cleansing and support for internationalinvestigation of such actions; offers support for relief efforts.

+ Albania demands that elected representatives of Kosovo participate in the London Conference on former Yugoslavia, scheduled for 26 to 28 August; says its participation is "indispensable" for restoration of peace and stability to region.

+ World Food Programme says tens of thousands of people are at risk in southern Sudan as relief efforts are hindered.

+ Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations to consider report of Secretary-General entitled "An Agenda for Peace" in open-ended working group, beginning tomorrow, 18 August.

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The Security Council this afternoon authorized Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to deploy, as a matter of urgency, United Nations observers in

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South Africa "to address areas of concern noted in his report". It also invited him to assist in the strengthening of the structures set up under the National Peace Accord in consultation with the relevant parties.

The Council took that action by unanimously adopting resolution 772 (1992), after considering the Secretary-General's report on the mission to South Africa undertaken by his Special Representative Cyrus Vance in mid-July.

In adopting the resolution the Council also called on the Government of South Africa, parties and organizations, and the Peace Accord structures, to extend their full cooperation to the United Nations observers to enable them to carry out their tasks effectively. It invited international organizations such as the Organization of African Unity, the Commonwealth and the European Community to consider the deploying their own observers in South Africa in coordination with the United Nations and the structures set up under the National Peace Accord.

The Council also requested the Secretary-General to report to the Security Council quarterly, or more frequently if necessary, on the implementation of the present resolution and also decided to remain seized of the matter until a democratic non-racial and united South Africa is established.

In his report, dated 7 August, the Secretary-General recommended that the United Nations make available some 30 observers in South Africa, in close association with the South African National Peace Secretariat, in order to enhance "the capacity of indigenous structures that can play a major role in the building of peace".

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in a statement issued on Friday 14 August, has expressed deep concern that the fighting in Kabul has escalated even further since his appeal of 10 August. The Secretary-General was particularly grieved by the heavy loss of life among the unarmed civilian population.

In the statement, the Secretary-General reiterated his appeal to all parties involved in the conflict to exercise maximum restraint and to lay down their arms immediately so that a dialogue could begin that would lead to a peaceful solution to the conflict. He also called on the parties to take every measure to protect the security of the diplomatic missions and international organizations and the safety of their personnel. He urged all those involved in the hostilities to heed the appeal of the Security Council for the establishment of necessary conditions to ensure the safe evacuation of foreign personnel.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali is expected to report to the Security Council "by the end of this week" on the talks on Cyprus held during

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the past weeks and on the positions held by the two sides in Cyprus, according to his Spokeswoman.

Following proximity talks between the two leaders of the Greek and Turkish communities, President George Vassiliou of Cyprus and H.E. Rauf Denktash, the Secretary-General held joint talks between the two leaders at the United Nations Headquarters on 12, 13 and 14 August. The Spokeswoman said the goal of these talks was to negotiate an agreement on the basis of the Set of Ideas, including the Secretary-General's suggestion on territorial adjustments and displaced persons.

The joint talks will now reconvene on Monday, 26 October.

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Milan Panic, the Prime Minister of Yugoslavia, has written to the President of the Security Council, Li Daoyu of China, stressing his Government's abhorrence of the "barbaric practice of ethnic cleansing", and its support for an international investigation of such actions. He contends that it will bring to justice any Yugoslav citizen found guilty of having engaged in ethnic cleansing and is conducting its own investigation into human rights violations within its borders.

The letter seeks to correct what Mr. Panic sees as incomplete information on policy statements and actions of his Government, which, he says, has had "a direct bearing on the attitude of the international community towards Yugoslavia".

Yugoslavia, he says, will cooperate in any way it can to ensure the peaceful delivery of humanitarian and relief supplies to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Emphasizing the Government's opposition to the use of force to change borders between countries, Mr. Panic reiterated its support for Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Macedonia.

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Albania has demanded that elected representatives of the people of Kosovo participate in the London Conference on former Yugoslavia, scheduled for 26 to 28 August, saying its participation is "indispensable" for a success of the Conference and for the restoration of peace and stability to the region. The Conference, which is the first stage of a multilateral effort to settle the current crisis in former Yugoslavia, will be co-chaired by the United Nations and the European Community.

In a letter dated 11 August to the Secretary-General, the Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of Albania, Sokol Necaj, said the situation of the 2 million Albanians in Kosovo was "intimately connected" with the overall settlement of the crisis in Former Yugoslavia. "To exclude Kosovo from the Conference and to exclude the situation within Kosovo from the agenda of the Conference would mean that the seeds of further conflict ... would be sown more widely". The exclusion would also, he said, "negate the aspiration

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of the Conference to establish an overall framework for the resolution of the interconnected disputes and conflicts within and around the former Yugoslavia".

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An eight-truck convoy, carrying 46 tons of urgently needed medical and food supplies, reached the city of Gorazde on Saturday, 15 August, where nearly 70,000 people have been living under siege for four months.

The convoy, mounted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), is the first to reach the embattled city in four months. It is part of UNHCR's efforts to expand its road convoy operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina to prevent the further displacement of people from the war-torn region.

According to a press release issued by the Agency today, the convoy had to stop for 90 minutes about 20 kilometres from Gorazde, near the town of Rogatica, because of automatic arms fire in the area. The convoy was delayed on the trip when it was forced to make a long detour to avoid landmines on a bridge. However, there were no reports of any injuries.

The UNHCR had, on numerous occasions, tried to get assurances of safe passage from the warring parties so it could bring in emergency relief supplies to the city. An earlier convoy that attempted to reach the city on 23 July was forced to turn back after hitting landmines.

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"Continuing failure to reach people in need of food aid could lead to a major disaster in southern Sudan of the same dimension of the 1988 catastrophe when tens of thousands of people died", warned World Food Programme (WFP) Executive Director, Catherine Bertini, on Friday in Nairobi. She expressed concern over the fate of hundreds of thousands of people who are at risk from starvation since relief aid workers cannot have access to them.

She reported that in accessible areas, at least 1 million people newly displaced since the beginning of the offensive earlier this year were in dire need of urgent relief assistance, whereas the plight of others living in inaccessible areas remained unknown. She described the conditions in which the internally displaced are living as "desperate" with widespread destitution, malnutrition, disease and death, affecting mainly women and children.

Ms Bertini also pointed out that in many cases, it has become virtually impossible to deliver relief aid, because of the absence of an agreement, if not outright refusal of both the Government of Sudan and the Sudanese People'Liberation Army (SPLA), to open road and air corridors. In addition, food airlifts - the only means of reaching the hardest-to-access areas - are repeatedly disrupted because of fuel shortages and lack of security clearance. Large numbers of people were fleeing into Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda in search of food, she said.

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The Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations will consider the report of Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali entitled "An Agenda for Peace" in an open-ended working group, beginning tomorrow, 18 August. At a brief meeting today the Committee approved its work programme for the week-long session, which will end with the adoption of its report to the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly opening next month.

The Secretary-General's report, which was issued mid-June, had been prepared at the request of the first Summit Meeting of the Security Council held on 31 January this year. It analyses recent developments affecting international peace and security and introduces a multifaceted, integrated programme of proposals aimed at enhancing the Organization's effectiveness in early warning of potential conflicts, their short- and long-term resolution and post-conflict measures to build peace among former adversaries.

At the meeting today, Ibrahim Gambari (Nigeria), Chairman of the Special Committee, expressed warm appreciation to the Secretary-General for his "most timely and courageous" report.

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